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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING

March 2, 2009

TESTIMONY

SB 791 AAC Banning Bisphenol-A in Certain Children's Products

HB 6572 AAC Banning Bisphenol-A in Children's Products and Food Products and Prohibiting Certain Alternative Substances

SB 919 An Act Phasing Out the Use of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers

SB 1021 AAC Notification & Remediation of Contaminants in Drinking Water

Rivers Alliance is the statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect and enhance Connecticut's waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state's many river groups, and educating the public about the importance of water stewardship.

Dear Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy, and Members of the Committee:

Rivers Alliance of Connecticut supports the goals of eliminating or phasing out as rapidly as possible the use bisphenol-A and polybrominated diphenyl ethers. These substances are water contaminants.

Bisphenol-A is one of numerous manmade endocrine disruptors found in the nation's water courses, estuaries, and salt waters. The ubiquitous brew of hormone-disrupting chemicals is affecting the sexual development of fish, amphibians, and, according to some studies, humans, as well. These chemicals come from plastics, pesticides, and medications. At present, there is no technology in place to get them out of our waters.

Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE) are chemically similar to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other polyhalogenated compounds. These manufactured compounds tend to be toxic, persistent, and they accumulate in animal and human bodies with negative effects on the hormonal, immune, and neurological systems. The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (2007) reported that PBDEs are

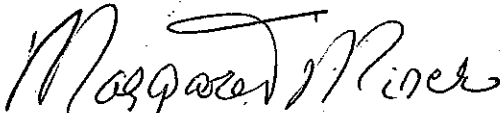
increasing rapidly in the Lakes' sediments. Among humans, children seem to be especially at risk of PBDE accumulation. PDBEs are widely found in breast milk.

With both bisphenol-A and PBDEs remediation and treatment once contamination and exposure have occurred is extremely difficult and expensive. The key is to reduce the presence of these chemicals in our water, air, and home environments.

Re SB 1021, we support the notification requirement. We believe it should be extended such that the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Public Health (including the Health Districts) be required to work together on a unified program to identify contaminants in potable water, and to notify all who may be using or planning to use such waters, including citizens on private wells.

Thank you for working to clean up our air and water.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Margaret Miner". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Margaret Miner,
Executive Director